

Trailers, Maintenance and Trailing

Objectives:

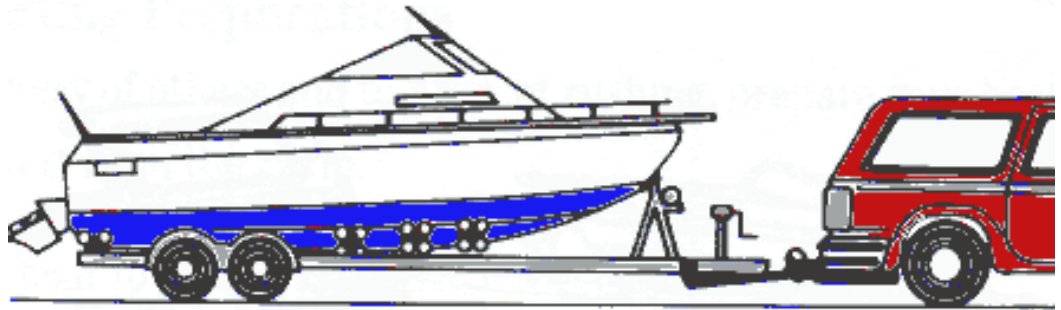
- ✦ List required equipment for safe trailing
- ✦ List safe trailing practices
- ✦ List normal maintenance procedures for trailers

Trailer

✦ Most recreational boats in the US are trailered to and from the water.

✦ Boating package:


- Boat
- Trailer
- Hitch
- Towing Vehicle





Boat/Trailer

- ✦ If possible, purchase the boat and trailer as a package from the manufacturer.
- ✦ Trailer should be designed to carry the total weight of the hull, engine, equipment and any extra gear normally carried.
- ✦ Manufacturer's capacity plate (never exceed 85% of total capacity).



Trailer Equipment

- ✱ Hitch
- ✱ Winch Mechanism
- ✱ Trailer Brakes
- ✱ Trailer Lights
- ✱ Transom Saver
- ✱ Bottom/Side Supports



Towing Vehicle

- ✚ Engine of adequate power (larger cooling system)
- ✚ Transmission designed for towing (transmission cooler)
- ✚ Heavy-duty brakes
- ✚ Mirrors
- ✚ Load bearing hitch attached to the frame (not the bumper)
- ✚ Tires

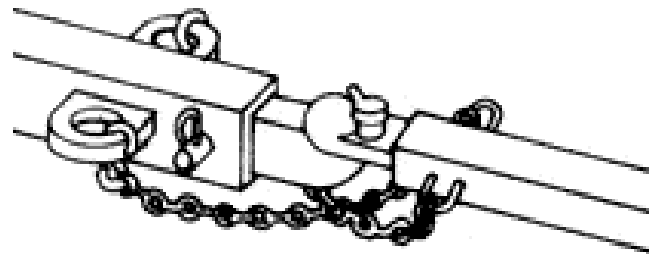
Hitching Up

- ✱ Socket on the trailer drops over the ball on the hitch
- ✱ Size determined by the class (weight) of trailer
- ✱ Safety Pin or Locking Mechanism
- ✱ Lights
- ✱ Trailer brakes
- ✱ Safety Chains



Safety Chains

- ✱ Criss-cross chains under the coupler to the frame of the vehicle
- ✱ The opening of the S-hook should point towards the boat, away from the vehicle



RIGHT

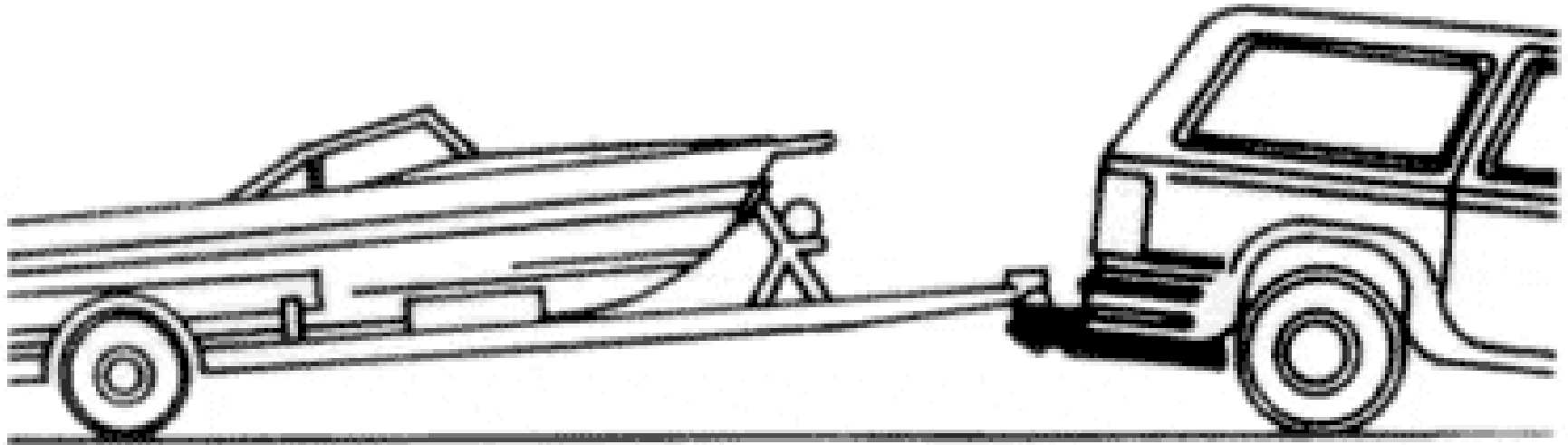


WRONG



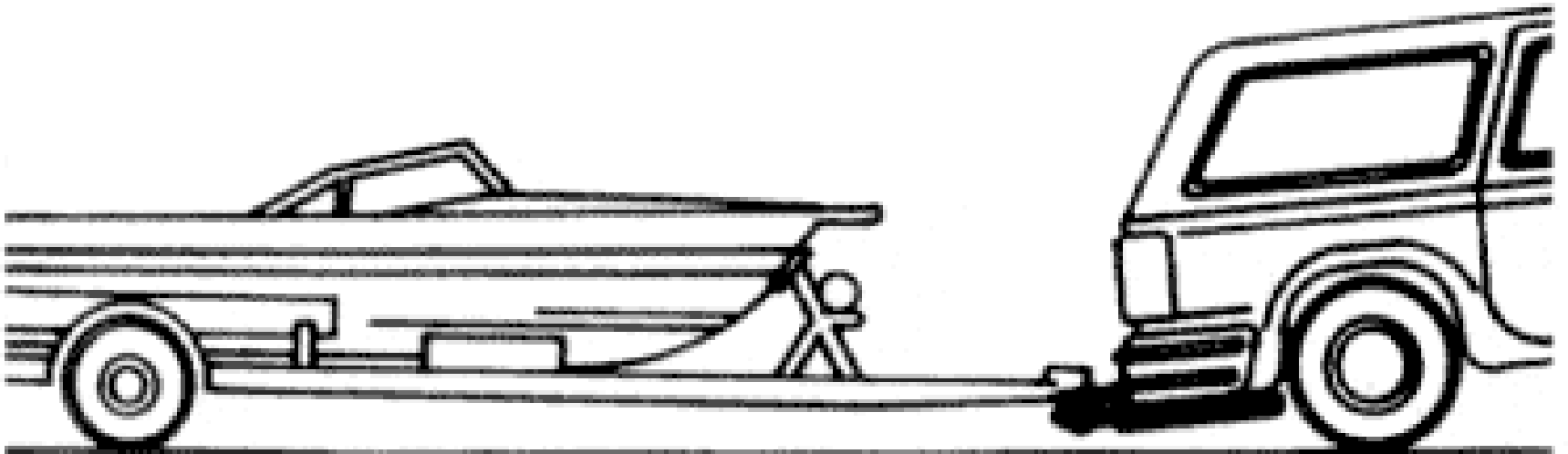
Balance the Weight

- ✖ Too much weight on the rear of the trailer will cause the trailer to fishtail and may reduce traction or lift the rear wheels of the tow vehicle off the ground



Balance the Weight

- ✘ Too much weight on the hitch will cause the rear wheels of the tow vehicle to drag and may make steering more difficult.



Safety Checks

- ✖ The driver is responsible!!!
- ✖ The tow ball and coupler are the same size
- ✖ The coupler is completely over the ball and the latching mechanism is locked.
- ✖ Safety chains are crossed and securely attached.
- ✖ Safety catch/chain is secured to bow of vessel.

Safety Checks

- ✖ The driver is responsible!!!
- ✖ Tie-downs are secured at the stern of the boat.
- ✖ Trailer lights are securely plugged in to the towing vehicle.
- ✖ Check brake lights and turn signals for proper operation.
- ✖ Check transom saver if applicable.

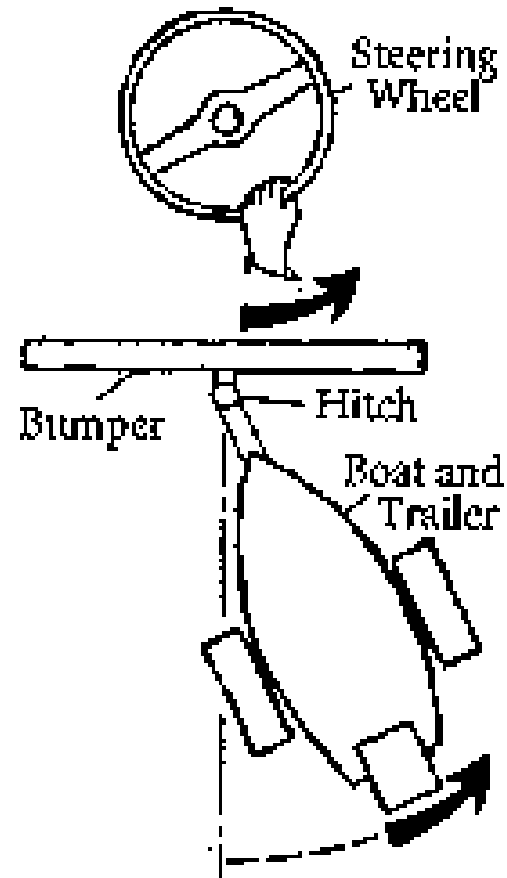


Towing Tips

- ✱ Allow more time to brake, accelerate, pass and stop.
- ✱ Turning radius is greater than normal.
- ✱ Check trailer, hitch, chain, tires, lights, gear after 100 miles.
- ✱ Watch the trailer in the rear-view mirror and listen for unusual noises.
- ✱ Practice!

Backing Hint

While grasping the bottom of the steering wheel, move your hand in the direction you want the trailer to go.





Launching

- ✱ Before leaving home make sure accessories work
- ✱ Prepare the boat for launching in an adjacent parking area
- ✱ Don't let a busy ramp rush you.
- ✱ If you leave your vehicle set the parking brake, chock wheels, put transmission in "park"



Launching

- ✖ Drain plug
- ✖ Unhook lights
- ✖ Tie-downs unhooked
- ✖ Proper trailer depths
- ✖ Someone to help
- ✖ Ramp conditions
- ✖ Weather conditions



Trailer Maintenance

- ✱ Tires – proper inflation, have a spare, check for dry rot
- ✱ Brakes – check fluids and operation
- ✱ Wheel Bearings –
 - Check frequently
 - Use waterproof grease
 - Carry an extra set

Trailer Maintenance

- ✱ Guides and Supports
- ✱ Winch
- ✱ Tie-downs and Straps
- ✱ Frame

